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ABSTRACT

This paper presents and illustrates some principles for organizational development approaches to improving school climate. It discusses a specific structure for facilitating school improvement entitled Program Development Evaluation, and it illustrates the use of school climate assessments for school diagnosis and the evaluation of improvement programs. It also suggests approaches to the special problem of school improvement in schools that need improvement the most--but where intervention is most difficult. Thirty-four references are listed. (TE)

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Center for Research On Elementary & Middle Schools

Report No. 17

July, 1987

USING ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT TO IMPROVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

Gary D. Gottfredson and Denise C. Gottfredson

The Johns Hopkins University

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THE CENTER

The mission of the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools is to produce useful knowledge about how elementary and middle schools can foster growth in students' learning and development, to develop and evaluate practical methods for improving the effectiveness of elementary and middle schools based on existing and new research findings, and to develop and evaluate specific strategies to implement effective research-based school and classroom practices.

The Center conducts its research in three program areas: (1) Elementary Schools, (2) Middle Schools, and (3) School Improvement.

The Elementary School Program

This program works from a strong existing research base to develop, evaluate, and disseminate effective elementary school and classroom practices; synthesizes current knowledge; and analyzes survey and descriptive data to expand the knowledge base for effective elementary education.

The Middle School Program

This program's research links current knowledge about early adolescence as a stage of human development to school organization and classroom policies and practices for effective middle schools. The program's research aims to identify specific problem areas and promising practices in middle schools to contribute to wise policy decisions and to develop effective school and classroom practices.

School Improvement Program

This program focuses on improving the organizational performance of schools in adopting and adapting innovations and on developing school capacity for change.

This report from the School Improvement Program presents and illustrates some principles for organization development approaches to improving school climate. It discusses a specific structure for facilitating school improvement, Program Development Evaluation, and the use of school climate assessments for school diagnosis and the evaluation of improvement programs.

ABSTRACT

Some principles for organization development approaches to improving school climate are presented and illustrated. A specific structure for facilitating school improvement, Program Development Evaluation, is discussed; and the use of school climate assessments for school diagnosis and the evaluation of improvement programs is illustrated. Approaches to the special problem of school improvement in schools that need improvement the most -- but where intervention is most difficult -- are suggested.

USING ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT TO IMPROVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

Despite limitations of research and theory, a number of methods have been devised to help schools implement change or to put practices new to the organization in place. These methods usually share a core of common elements, but they differ in detail. For example, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) has produced a structure for school improvement called "Onward to Excellence" (Blum & Butler, 1985). To use this structure, a school contracts with NWREL for training and assistance for a one-year period. The NWREL personnel go through ten steps with a school team. Joyce, Hersh, and McKibbin (1983) describe a similar method for improving schools that emphasizes "homeostasis of improvement," that is, making the school improvement process a part of the regular business of school life. Their process recognizes the social and political context within which school improvement takes place and builds strategies to cope with forces that may inhibit change.

A variety of school improvement methods have been suggested. For example, Howard (1978), Fox and associates (1974), and Wayson et al. (1982) present similar methods for planning for "school climate improvement" that call for an informal initial needs assessment called an "audit," principal leadership in the development of school improvement teams, and the development of innovations to improve the school. Brookover et al. (1982) present another method, as do Hall (1979), Klausmeier (1982, 1985), and Schmuck and Runkel (1985) -- still others are

described by Miles and Kaufman (1985).

Perhaps the most comprehensive of all the methods proposed for structuring programs to increase school effectiveness is Program Development **Evaluation (PDE),** developed and tested at the Johns Hopkins University (D. Gottfredson, 1986a, 1986b; G. Gottfredson, 1982, 1984, 1985b; G. Gottfredson, D. Gottfredson, & Cook, 1983; G. Gottfredson, Rickert, Advani, & D. Gottfredson, 1984).

This method -- often used in conjunction with the Effective School Battery (G. Gottfredson, 1985a) to diagnose organizational problems and provide a basis for evaluation -- differs from most related methods in two ways. First, it uses "theory" as one of the bases for defining programs, selecting interventions, and evaluating progress; and the method itself is based on a theory of organizational effectiveness. Theory plays a central role in the PDE method because it clarifies objectives and focuses program development on a variety of alternative interventions directed at school objectives while excluding irrelevant interventions, and it provides a basis for day-to-day decision making in circumstances where no well developed plans exist.

A second difference between PDE and related methods is that PDE calls for more detailed attention to the problem of implementation. It does this by (a) focusing on the culture of the school, (b) developing specific plans for the adoption of innovations which contain mechanisms to monitor successes and unanticipated failures in strategies to put innovation in place, and (c) incorporating specific

mechanisms to monitor the fidelity with which innovations are implemented in the school.

Each of these school improvement methods for schools are, in a way, attempts to describe how organization development to improve school climate might be approached. The PDE method is specific about the theory of organizational effectiveness underlying its approach, and it provides one basis for cumulating knowledge about improving school performance. Like other organization development (OD) approaches, PDE provides a structure for coping with and actively manipulating programmatic "regularities" (Sarason, 1971) to achieve the adoption and implementation of new practices, policies, or procedures. The application of the PDE method involves explicitly considering the organizational culture surrounding a particular innovation, problem, or school improvement effort.

In applying the PDE method, researchers collaborate with school personnel to

- define problems and set measurable organizational goals,
- specify theories of action on which to base the school improvement program,
- define measurable objectives linked to the theory of action,
- select interventions intended to achieve these specific objectives,
- identify and plan to overcome obstacles to the implementation of the interventions selected by using Force-Field Analysis and other methods of organization diagnosis,
- develop detailed plans including critical benchmarks to monitor progress in coping with obstacles to adoption and implementation, and

> specify implementation standards to serve as blueprints for the interventions.

Educational practitioners collaborate with researchers in the evaluation of their school improvement efforts and use the evaluative information to refine the intervention(s). An information and feedback system is used to determine whether progress is being made towards implementation, whether innovations are being put in place as planned, and whether the innovations are working as expected to achieve objectives and goals. The process is intended to be helical -- planning and program development become part of the everyday routine in the organization, creating a spiral of improvement.<1>

The PDE method recognizes that schools often work as loosely coupled systems (Weick, 1982). But it assumes that when the school goals and objectives are made clear and agreed upon, the problems that loose coupling creates for school improvement can be alleviated. Developing explicit standards for performance, communicating these standards, assessing compliance or noncompliance with the standards, and adjusting performance in accordance with feedback will increase school effectiveness.

<1>For more details of the method and an account of the theory of organization development underpinning it, see G. Gottfredson (1984) and G. Gottfredson et al. (1984).

Conditions Conducive to OD Interventions in Schools

Experience implies that schools differ in their amenability to OD interventions (see, for example, Berman & McLaughlin, 1977; Fullan, 1982; Fullan, Miles, & Taylor, 1980; Grant & Capell, 1983; Little, 1982). One summary of some school characteristics associated with full participation in OD activities was provided by Fullan et al. (1980): (a) A spirit of collaboration exists, and open communication is possible and valued; (b) the administration is supportive of (or at least not negative toward) the intervention; (c) the school does not have a history of one failed innovation after another; and (d) the entire staff is involved in the decision to participate in the project.

Research has also revealed that cooperation between faculty and administration and measures of the quality of school administration and of teacher morale are related to school safety (G. Gottfredson, 1985a; G. Gottfredson and D. Gottfredson, 1985). Furthermore, staff morale or teacher sense of efficacy appears to be an important ingredient in the adoption or implementation of school improvement programs (Berman & McLaughlin, 1976; Fullan, 1982). This suggests that in some of our least orderly schools, it is difficult to improve practices in ways that would bring about greater orderliness through OD interventions.

Although it is precisely in our most disorderly, demoralized schools that we are most in need of research and OD interventions that will help improve the quality of education, the same conditions that make education difficult and unpleasant are conditions that researchers also appear to avoid when deciding

where to implement their research projects. One needs no special powers of observation to discern that most educational researchers develop, pilot, and evaluate methods and techniques in schools where it is easiest to conduct their research.

Consequently, over the years educational researchers have developed a number of useful technologies that, *when properly implemented*, increase learning and bring about other salutary outcomes. In contrast, we have done little research on the problem of getting helpful technology implemented in schools that need it the most.

In the remainder of this paper, we will place the task of school improvement in context by describing a school with difficult problems, and then we will review some ideas that researchers can use in working with practitioners to help make troubled schools better and safer places. Last, we describe the results of one concrete OD intervention for which PDE provided the principal structure.

An Illustrative Case

Let us describe an actual junior high school in trouble. It is a 100% black school located in a working class area. Last year one student was shot to death in this school, and the carrying of weapons in the school is commonplace. Fights occur often. The principal hopes to retire soon. Far from seeming on top of the school's problems, the principal is not sure what the typical daily attendance is. (It is low.) The central administration is concerned about this school. A major disturbance

occurred a few years ago, and central administrators and community members alike are holding their breath in anticipation of more trouble. Students and young people who are not students roam throughout the school virtually at will; the major response of the principal to this intruder problem was to put chains on many of the doors to the building -- a practice dispensed with once it came to the attention of the fire marshal. Staff turnover in the school is high, with many teachers putting in for transfers to other schools each year.

To help plan a program to improve this school's climate, we assessed it using the Effective School Battery (G. Gottfredson, 1985a). The ESB is a tool for diagnosing school problems and identifying strengths that is based on a survey of students and teachers. The ESB profiles for the school are shown in Figures 1 through 4.

On the teacher psychosocial climate profile, two of the more global scales -- Safety and Morale -- are very low. In this case, the low teacher response rate, taken together with the low Morale score, reinforce the interpretation that morale is a major problem. This interpretation is further reinforced by the high staff turnover rate mentioned earlier. The low Morale score suggests that it will probably be very difficult to work with the staff in school improvement programs, but the low Safety scale and the generally low elevation of the entire profile imply that a school improvement program is desperately needed. None of the teacher psychosocial climate scales is above average, and three of the more specific climate measures are in the low or very low range. Taken together the profiles for the school imply that it has multiple problems, that staff are demoralized

Figure 1

SCHOOL PSYCHOSOCIAL CLIMATE TEACHER REPORTS

MEASURE	PERCENTILE	VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATELY LOW	AVERAGE	MODERATELY HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
SAFETY	1	x						
MORALE	6		x					
PLANNING AND ACTION	7		x					
SMOOTH ADMINISTRATION	23			x				
RESOURCES	31				x			
RACE RELATIONS	42				x			
PARENT / COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	33				x			
STUDENT INFLUENCE	11		x					
AVOIDANCE OF THE OF GRADES AS A SANCTION	2	x						

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED — VERY GOOD

Figure 2

SCHOOL PSYCHOSOCIAL CLIMATE STUDENT REPORTS

MEASURE	PERCENTILE	VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATELY LOW	AVERAGE	MODERATELY HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
SAFETY	9		x					
RESPECT FOR STUDENTS	26			x				
PLANNING AND ACTION	10		x					
FAIRNESS OF RULES	46				x			
CLARITY OF RULES	67					x		
STUDENT INFLUENCE	40			-	x			

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED — VERY GOOD

Figure 3

SCHOOL POPULATION TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS

MEASURE	PERCENTILE	VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATELY LOW	AVERAGE	MODERATELY HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
PRO-INTEGRATION ATTITUDE	50				×			
JOB SATISFACTION	2	×						
INTERACTION WITH STUDENTS	41				×			
PERSONAL SECURITY	11		×					
CLASSROOM ORDERLINESS	9		×					
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	14		×					
NONAUTHORITARIAN ATTITUDES	30			×				

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED — VERY GOOD

Figure 4

SCHOOL POPULATION STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

MEASURE	PERCENTILE	VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATELY LOW	AVERAGE	MODERATELY HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
PARENTAL EDUCATION	56				×			
POSITIVE PEER ASSOCIATIONS	52				×			
EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATION	60				×			
SOCIAL INTEGRATION	5	×						
ATTACHMENT TO SCHOOL	47				×			
BELIEF IN RULES	51				×			
INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCY	26			×				
INVOLVEMENT	24			×				
POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT	50				×			
SCHOOL EFFORT	31				×			
AVOIDANCE OF PUNISHMENT	6	×						
SCHOOL REWARDS	22			×				

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED — VERY GOOD

and students alienated. The task for anyone trying to help this school improve its climate will be to kindle a fire under the administration and staff; to help set priorities for *beginning* school improvements; and to achieve some early successes, at least in small ways, to create the impression that something can be done to improve matters.

In such a school multiple obstacles to the adoption of new programs emerge. A researcher attempting to create and study change in such a school does not simply walk in, recommend an intervention and an experimental design, and expect to experience any degree of success at all.

A Few Ideas for Improving School Climate

In a healthy school or other organization, it is sometimes possible to "plug in" a new practice or technique. Provided that the innovation is useful for the organization and "fits" into the structures and processes of the organization, the innovation will be adopted and used. In such a school there is an infrastructure on which technologies can rest. School climate can be discussed, and personnel in the school can be expected to cooperate to implement needed changes. But schools like the one we have just described are demoralized -- the organization has an ailing skeleton not substantial enough to support innovation.

Key parts of a school's backbone are a shared view of the organization's goals, an effective and trusted communication system, a mechanism for systematically noticing and responding to worker and student behavior, and an organizational

structure suited to getting the school's work done. The school whose climate profiles were examined earlier does not just have discipline problems; it has problems with its infrastructure.

To improve the climate in demoralized schools, we will need not only good ideas about discipline and instruction but also good ideas about solving some more general organizational problems. No one can provide a comprehensive guide to overhauling schools in trouble, but the following list of general principles might form a good starting point:

1. Performance in implementing new procedures is enhanced when teachers and administrators share clearly understood school goals and understand the rationale underlying the new procedures.

2. The more directly implementers benefit from the new procedures, the more likely they are to use them and persist in doing so.

3. Schools are more likely to become better and safer places if the collection and use of information about school disorder, instruction, and the extent to which expected procedures are being implemented -- and about the nature of impediments to implementation -- is encouraged rather than discouraged.

4. Innovation is more likely when explicit plans for the adoption of new practices are available. These plans must include strategies to cope with obstacles to organizational change in the school that are identified by the teachers and administrators who must implement the new practices.

5. Manuals or guidelines providing concrete guidance in the application of new procedures increase the probability of implementation. People who will be implementing the new practices need to know what they are expected to do.

6. People who are expected to implement the new procedures are likely to do so only if they have the resources and arrangements needed to do so.

7. People who are expected to implement the new procedures are likely to do so only if their behavior is observed and responded to in encouraging ways by others in the organization.

8. The foregoing conditions are most likely to emerge when a structured process is used to foster their emergence.

These principles are derived from several sources: our attempts to specify a general method for improving the effectiveness of organizations (G. Gottfredson, 1984), the research and experience of others in attempting to improve the effectiveness of organizations (French & Bell, 1978), a theory of work performance (Porter & Lawler, 1968), and our practical experience in working with schools and other organizations (D. Gottfredson, 1986a, 1986b; G. Gottfredson, 1985b). Although simple to state, the principles are difficult to apply.

Practical Application

The practical application of these principles usually involves an iterative process. Attempts to introduce new practices in a school with a decayed infrastructure usually generate apathetic responses or, if honest communication is achieved, what we call the "yes but" phenomenon. Attempts to plan for new procedures are thwarted by a series of objections that a litany of obstacles will make the new procedures impossible to apply. When morale in a school is low, it is difficult for faculty to believe that they can count on the school's administration or other faculty to follow through with the necessary actions or resources, and it is difficult for the administration to believe that faculty will implement their part of the program. A planning method that breaks the job of developing the new program into component parts (as does the Program Development Evaluation method) can be helpful.

In one part of the planning process, it is useful to reach agreement on what desirable practices would be regardless of the obstacles everyone in the school may see to their implementation. In a *separate* step, it is useful to examine what the perceived obstacles to implementation are. Then in a third step, it is useful to develop specific plans to overcome these obstacles.

Some Common Obstacles

Some common obstacles are seen repeatedly not only in schools but in other organizations as well. Here are some of the obstacles that practitioners, teachers and administrators commonly perceive:

> Administrative ambiguity -- a lack of guidelines for teacher behavior.

> Miscommunication, lack of communication, incomplete or inscrutable communication.

> A history of unrealistic school system demands for the "appearance" of programs (and lots of them) but no real system rewards for doing at least one thing well.<2>

> Poor inter-group relations -- i.e., relations between teachers and administrators, teachers and parents, or persons of different ethnic groups.

> Quantitative work overload, unproductive use of time, or little time for planning and staff development.

> Ambiguity about lines of authority in organizational units.

> Institutional non-responsiveness.

<2> For example, school systems often require that all schools adopt certain "programs" without providing the requisite training, resources, and technical assistance. Some schools have so many programs on paper that they are not really implementing that personnel are bewildered when a researcher presses them really to implement a program. Such paper programs may therefore do more harm than good.

> Lack of incentives for performance.

To these obstacles often perceived by school personnel can be added additional obstacles often perceived by researchers acting as change agents:

> Incorrect perceptions that action is limited by "policy" when no such policies exist; this obstacle is related to problems of flawed communication.

> Inappropriate responses by school system administrators to the open discussion of school problems which creates a climate more conducive to covering up problems than to attempting to solve them.

> Mistrust of researchers or a lack of belief that research can really have practical value in a school.

> A lack of systematic mechanisms for monitoring school problems or progress, and a lack of mechanisms for monitoring and responding to the behavior of faculty and administrators; this is related to what faculty regard as a lack of incentives for performance.

Approaches to Overcoming these Obstacles

Researchers whose aim is to learn how to improve school climate share with practitioners the need to overcome these common obstacles. In order to study the effects of new practices, those practices must first be implemented. Accordingly, problems relating to the management of the change effort and indeed of the school itself are shared by both researchers and practitioners. To conduct field research that will contribute to the improvement of school climate, researchers must therefore acquire the skills necessary to achieve implementation.

Again, a small number of principles appear useful. Included among them are the following:

Use an assessment of school climate or other forms of "needs assessment" to focus attention on areas of needed improvement. Without a concrete tool to focus discussion, faculty and administrators often avoid directing attention to problems they do not see a way to solve. It is often useful for the researcher or OD facilitator to insist that attention be focused on the data about a school until discussion indicates that the data are meaningful or that a plausible explanation of their artifactual nature is established.<3> Because of their greater credibility, school climate assessments that have been developed following rigorous procedures and with documented evidence of reliability and construct validity probably serve this function better than *ad hoc* assessments (Hollifield, 1986). Examples of such devices include the ESB and the School Assessment Survey (SAS; Wilson, Firestone, & Herriott, 1984).

Address one obstacle at a time. To have productive discussion it is necessary to limit the range of discussion to a single issue so that the "yes but" phenomenon does not become overwhelming. Managing this approach takes some skill so that school personnel do not feel they are being bulldozed by a change

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<3>For example, one suburban school that for the past two years had been undergoing a substantial demographic shift from an all white school to a school serving a studentry of mixed ethnicity turned up low scores on the ESB measures of Pro-integration Attitudes, Student Social Integration, and Teacher Job Satisfaction. Although this pattern suggested that racial tension may be undermining school climate, the faculty and administrators were inclined to focus their attention elsewhere until a facilitator repeatedly focused questions on these data. After probing, the nearly all white faculty and administrators admitted that they were uneasy with the changes in school composition and felt they did not know how to manage social interaction in an integrated school or with parents of members of minority groups. The group then began to formulate plans to probe for problems and solutions in the area of ethnic minority relations.

agent, people feel their points of view are respected, and all important obstacles are given due consideration.

Try to achieve what Weick (1984) has called "small wins." Not only are there limits to the complexity of problems that humans can competently address, but in demoralized organizations even small but concrete and visible accomplishments can attract attention and a following.

Attempt problem solving in groups involving persons at different levels, especially if communication is a problem in the organization. Meetings compress communication by doing away with intermediary channels and decreasing the likelihood that information will be distorted in transmission. Participation of relevant persons in the school is important not for participation's sake, but because of the information about resources and obstacles that those directly involved in the day-to-day operation of the organization have to offer. The people in the school system -- faculty, building administrators, regional and district administrators -- can often generate the solutions to problems if they are asked to do so. If the relevant actors are involved in problem solving, it is easy to check on the accuracy of perceptions about "policy" and what will be acceptable to all groups.

Develop, as a result of the problem-solving effort, a set of critical benchmarks that will signal progress in overcoming obstacles (see G. Gottfredson, 1984). These critical benchmarks resemble what are called "forecasting controls" in industry. If these benchmarks are met, they signal success in changing elements of the status quo that thwart the adoption of new practices, and therefore forecast

ultimate success in implementing the entire plan for implementing change. If not met they signal the need to revise the plan.

Write down and disseminate decisions about policies, plans, and key decisions; and decisions about who is to take specific steps, when, to make the adoption of new practices possible. These written plans provide a basis for monitoring progress on the small steps towards adoption and implementation of innovations. They serve not only to avoid ambiguity about who is to do what by when, but they serve also as a tool for providing small social rewards or recognition that progress is being made -- a worker reinforcement tool.

Can It Be Done?

It is possible to work with troubled schools to build the infrastructure necessary to implement new practices and techniques. It takes time; as far as we can determine there is no simple expedient that will quickly install a backbone in a sagging organization. When, for example, there is a lack of belief on the part of faculty that they can count on the school's administration to come through with its part of an agreement, it may be necessary to monitor the administration's faithfulness in exchanges, provide constant feedback, and gradually bring about circumstances where faculty *can* count on administrators.

An illustration of progress made over a three-year period in one difficult school is shown in Table 1. This school is located in an inner-city, predominantly black community. U.S. Census data show that the school's catchment area is

Table 1

Means and Percentiles for One School's ESB Measures, 1983 to 1985

	1983	1984	1985	t	Effect size
Teacher Reports of School Climate					
Safety	3.12 (9)	3.44 (30)	3.38 (25)	2.50*	.61
Morale	1.34 (7)	1.47 (26)	1.53 (40)	4.36**	1.23
Planning and action	1.53 (38)	1.59 (56)	1.62 (63)	2.30*	.80
Smooth administration	1.41 (3)	1.50 (12)	1.60 (31)	4.52**	1.27
Resources	2.06 (12)	2.35 (31)	2.39 (34)	1.90	.76
Race relations	1.10 (5)	1.39 (38)	1.50 (56)	4.05**	1.99
Parent-community involvement	1.30 (56)	1.38 (78)	1.36 (73)	1.12	.50
Student influence	1.40 (32)	1.52 (61)	1.43 (38)	.39	.16
Avoidance of the use of grades as a sanction	1.83 (45)	1.78 (28)	1.83 (47)	.21	.11
Teacher Characteristics					
Pro-integration attitudes	2.90 (36)	3.08 (60)	3.04 (56)	.96	.21
Job satisfaction	2.48 (3)	2.54 (7)	2.49 (4)	.10	.02
Interaction with students	2.18 (35)	2.31 (56)	2.21 (39)	.21	.04
Personal security	.76 (5)	.75 (3)	.81 (18)	1.42	.29
Classroom orderliness	2.18 (4)	2.37 (12)	2.55 (29)	2.32*	.50
Professional development	1.36 (8)	1.55 (28)	1.44 (25)	1.46	.33
Nonauthoritarian attitudes	2.28 (15)	2.36 (22)	2.54 (43)	1.58	.32
Student Reports of School Climate					
Safety	.68 (16)	.71 (28)	.71 (28)	1.30	.37
Clarity of rules	.79 (89)	.79 (91)	.83 (97)	1.11	.63
Fairness of rules	.62 (49)	.57 (24)	.57 (27)	-1.03	-.50
Student influence	.39 (50)	.38 (46)	.38 (47)	-.12	-.06
Student-teacher interaction	.69 (37)	.69 (38)	.63 (24)	-.55	-.35
Respect for students	.96 (20)	.94 (18)	.99 (26)	.41	.18
Student Characteristics					
Positive peer associations	.76 (44)	.75 (37)	.77 (48)	.71	.04
Interpersonal competency	.74 (25)	.76 (35)	.75 (33)	.95	.05
Social integration	.56 (14)	.58 (24)	.63 (52)	5.42**	.27
Attachment to school	.67 (49)	.65 (37)	.67 (47)	-.38	-.02
Belief in rules	.66 (39)	.70 (68)	.72 (82)	5.02**	.25
Parental education	2.05 (43)	2.08 (45)	2.07 (45)	.37	.02
Educational expectations	3.46 (68)	3.13 (43)	3.18 (47)	-3.50**	-.17
School rewards	.23 (27)	.26 (42)	.30 (60)	4.83**	.26
Avoidance of school punishments	.66 (3)	.67 (4)	.67 (4)	.75	.04
School effort	.62 (58)	.60 (49)	.60 (48)	-1.17	-.06
Positive self-concept	.76 <a>	.74 <a>	.76 <a>	-.33	-.02
Involvement	<b>	.19 (27)	.20 (31)	.60<b>	.03<b>

Note. Percentiles appear in parentheses next to mean scale scores. 1983 means are based on 790 student surveys and 37 teacher surveys. 1984 means are based on 1160 student surveys and 57 teacher surveys. 1985 means are based on 909 student surveys and 68 teacher surveys.

<a> This scale lacks one item that is included in the ESB scale by the same name. Normative data are unavailable.

<b> Format of involvement items on 1983 survey differed from that on the 1984 and 1985 surveys. Comparisons are meaningful only between the 1984 and 1985 scores. t and effect size are for 1984-1985 comparison.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

characterized by a high percentage of female-headed households, persons in low status occupations, and families below the poverty level (D. Gottfredson, 1986c). The ESB percentiles in the Table 1 column headed "1983" show that when the program began the teachers and to a lesser extent the students had negative opinions about the school. Teachers and students reported that the school was unsafe. Teachers reported that they were victimized frequently (the Personal Security score was at the fifth percentile). Morale was extremely low -- teachers scored only at the seventh percentile. And the Respect for Students scale (a general indicator of the extent to which students are treated with dignity in the school) was at the 20th percentile.

The low score on the Smooth Administration scale suggested tensions between the staff and administrators, and the low scores on the Classroom Orderliness and Avoidance of School Punishment scales suggested an unhealthy climate of disorder and frequent punishment.

A researcher (D. Gottfredson, 1986b) worked with this school following the principles spelled out earlier in this paper. She and a team of teachers, administrators, and other school staff sought to identify and overcome obstacles to the implementation of several innovations aimed at reducing school disorder and increasing students' chances for success. Few of the obstacles were overcome on the first try, but the team sought to learn why their plans were not working and renew the effort to move forward.

By the end of the three-year project the teams had implemented major innovations in the areas of classroom management and instruction, had revised school-wide discipline policies and practices, and had implemented several innovations aimed at increasing parent involvement and decreasing student alienation. Specific innovations and implementation are described elsewhere (D. Gottfredson, 1986b; 1986c).

Table 1 shows that the school improved over the course of the project. The school became safer ($p < .05$) and the classrooms more orderly ($p < .05$) according to the teachers' reports in the ESB assessment. Other data showed that students' self-reported delinquent behavior also declined significantly ($p < .01$; D. Gottfredson, 1986b; 1986c). The improvement in student behavior was accompanied by significant improvements in the student attitudes and experiences targeted by the program -- Social Integration and School Rewards (both $p < .01$).

The most dramatic improvements are on the ESB measures of organizational health. Teacher Morale rose from the 7th to the 40th percentile ($p < .01$), teacher reports of innovation (Planning and Action) rose from the 38th to the 63rd percentile ($p < .05$) and teachers' perceptions of the administration became much more positive (Smooth Administration rose from the 3rd to the 31st percentile, $p < .01$).

This illustration demonstrates that progress can be made toward school improvement -- even in demoralized schools. The school in our example became more orderly, and the increased orderliness was not brought about at the expense

of student well-being or by removing difficult students from the school. This is not to say that the school has been dramatically "turned around." The faculty is still more demoralized than most, and it still has negative views of the administration. But progress is clear and visible to everyone in the school and in the central administration of the district. There is every reason to believe that if the collaboration between the researcher and the educational practitioners in this school continued that the school's climate would continue to improve.

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